Remarks of

The Honorable Daniel S. Goldin

NASA Administrator

Budget Briefing

February 2, 1998

Good afternoon.

Each year, when I stand before you to present the proposed NASA budget, I am extremely confident we will meet our commitments. And I am confident of the work we will do.

But -- because it is the always risky and often dangerous nature of exploring the unknown -- I can't predict just how astonishing that work will be.

What an incredible year we just had!

At NASA, we dared to dream. We imagined what could be possible. And then we went to work.

Thanks to the brave women and men of our astronaut corps who risk their lives

to benefit humankind . . . and thanks to our contractors and all of the dedicated NASA employees . . . this past year was marked by successful shuttle mission after successful shuttle mission.

Each mission brought back sound science and made possible the continuing historic preparations for the International Space Station, the largest peacetime scientific and technological project ever.

The images of the Hubble telescope revealed new worlds to explore; and the trail blazed by the Mars Pathfinder rekindled the human spirit. Like our shuttle missions, the Pathfinder reinvigorated our sense of adventure and inspired young and old alike.

Thanks -- in large part -- to NASA satellites and technology, Newspapers around the globe warned of a weather phenomenon called El Niño . . . perhaps the very first seasonal forecast. Now, we can predict . . . we can prepare . . . and perhaps we can even prevent catastrophe.

And in aeronautics, over the past year we joined forces with the aviation industry, the FAA, and DOD and made an important new commitment to air travel.

NASA will help build a stronger America by committing to air travel that is not only faster, better, and cheaper . . . but much safer and cleaner than ever before.

Not a bad way for NASA to enter its 40th year.

For the past 4 decades, we have established a strong tradition of living up to our vision as "an investment in America's future," and as an agency that is pioneering that future.

And over the last five years, we've established a new and equally strong tradition of meeting the Administration's goal of reinventing government.

Today, NASA works better, costs less, and does much, much more.

I know that a budget is about priorities and the promise of the future. But I also believe -- deeply -- that a budget isn't only about priorities and promise. It is also about performance.

In a moment, I will get into the numbers of our budget. But if you go home with one message today, let it be this:

Realizing the promise of the future depends on delivering on the promises made

to the American people.

At NASA we are meeting our commitments.

And we will continue to do so.

The Administration has clearly articulated its goals for the civil aeronautics and space programs.

(The National Space Policy and The Goals for a National Partnership in Aeronautic Research and Technology)

The NASA Strategic Plan lays out our programs to achieve these goals.

And the budget proposal which I present to you today provides the resources required to do that.

When I was confirmed, I said that a vision must be matched by a schedule and a budget.

That is what we have. That is the context for this budget.

I will quickly go through the highlights of the budget proposal for each enterprise.

First -- Human Exploration and Development of Space.

In 1998, we at NASA, along with 15 other nations, are on target to begin the assembly of the International Space Station. Our budget fully funds the ambitious research program for the station. We are meeting our commitment.

However, as we continue to prepare for the International Space Station and whatever comes next, the highest priority of the human space flight program continues to be the safe launch, operation and return of the Space Shuttle and its crew.

Over the next two years, Space Shuttle operations will continue the transition to a single prime contractor.

And this budget will allow us to complete the major shuttle upgrades already underway

as well as maintaining the funding for future upgrades.

In sum, I am proud that the Space Shuttle team is delivering on its promise:

We meet our flight rate. We have less and less in-flight hardware problems. We're flying for less money. And we are safer today than ever before.

As for new projects, we have identified as a start-up in Fiscal Year 2000 . . . the Space Station's Crew Return Vehicle.

During the next year, we will closely watch the X-38 development and monitor cost projections. That way we can verify the appropriate funding levels when we begin this new start-up.

A final word on the Human Exploration enterprise.

It is our belief that the peer reviewed life and micro-gravity science from the International Space Station could have a tremendous impact for life here on Earth.

And it is our hope, that the research and experience gained from the space station, the shuttle, and the new crew return vehicle will help us study the mission requirements and the technological barriers for extended human exploration beyond Earth orbit.

We can't be afraid. It is our destiny to take that next step . That step might be the moon. It might be Mars. Maybe even beyond.

Next -- Space Science.

Let me share with you a quick example of the direction the Space Science enterprise is going in.

In the 1980's we launched two -- count them, two -- solar system exploration missions . . .

Magellan and Galileo.

During the 15 month period which commenced in October 1997 through January 1999 . . .

we will have launched seven spacecraft -- an average of one every 10 weeks.

Cassini, Lunar Prospector, Deep Space 1, Mars 98 Orbiter, Mars 98 Lander, Deep Space 2

and Stardust.

And the last six of these missions are each less than half the price of Cassini.

Our 1999 budget fully funds all of our major space science missions, including Origins, Discovery and Explorer.

And as the mission operations budget continues to go down . . . our mission load will continue to go up.

That's how we're meeting our commitments. And we're being rewarded for this performance.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton announced the 21st Century Research Fund for path-breaking scientific inquiry.

I am pleased that fund calls for a 4 percent increase in Space Science and $700 million increase

over the next five years.

With this budget, we will be able to focus on fundamental questions regarding the Sun-Earth connection and the structure and evolution of the universe.

With this budget, we will be able to build on the success of the Mars Pathfinder and the Mars Global Surveyor with more robotic missions, including -- hopefully -- the technology for a sample return mission.

And I am pleased to announce that the Europa Orbiter has been selected as NASA's first outer planet technology mission.

That, too, is in the budget.

We hope this mission will help us learn more about the liquid water ocean that we think Galileo may have detected underneath Europa's thick icy crust. And we hope this mission helps us develop the technology that we might need for an interstellar probe in the not too distant future.

In Earth Science (formerly Mission to Planet Earth).

We need to better understand the total Earth system and the effects of natural and human induced changes on the global climate.

That's why we want to continue to use a fleet of spacecraft and various instruments to help us -- hopefully -- develop predictive environmental, climate, natural disaster, and natural resource models.

You will notice that the Earth Science budget is lower in its five year projection than last year.

There's a good reason for that -- a reason we are very proud of.

We now have lower cost spacecraft that meet -- or exceed -- our toughest requirements.

And this lower budget not only fully funds our current programs -- EOS and Earth probes.

It also provides the funding for two new programs and compliments a third.

We will start the QuickSCAT program and the LightSAR program as long as we get commercial sponsorship for LightSAR.

Because the scientific community indicated we did not have enough R & A funds, we supplemented these funds to meet their needs. In addition, we have met all of the biennial requirements for Earth Science.

I am proud. The Earth Science group is doing more with less.

Finally -- Aeronautics and Space Transportation and Technology.

The upcoming budget continues NASA's commitment to the strategic technology goals we announced last year.

This budget also allows us to forge ahead on development of advanced launch vehicles --

the X-33 and the X-34 -- that will revitalize the American launch industry.

Each has passed critical design reviews and we have begun building flight hardware.

And last but not least, this budget will let us continue the important work of developing

the Next Generation Internet to increase network capacity at least 1,000 times.

Now before I take your questions, I would like to show some charts to illustrate the budget numbers, as well as the great success we've had in meeting our down-sizing goal.

(Mr. Goldin proceeded to show a series of four charts.

The first chart showed the stability of the Fiscal Year 1999 budget. The second chart showed the balance between NASA's four strategic enterprises. The third chart measured the "Faster, Better, Cheaper" progress of spacecraft development and flight rate. The fourth chart tracked NASA's success in down-sizing.)

This budget will enable us to keep up the important work of opening the air and space frontiers and enriching the lives of all Americans.

Last year was exciting. I'm willing to bet this year will be even better.

I would like to thank President Clinton and his Administration for recognizing NASA's promise . . . for making us a priority . . . and for committing to us the resources we need

to pioneer the future.

Rest assured . . . as we have for the past forty years . . .NASA will perform.

We will meet our commitments . . . and we'll inspire millions -- young and old -- along the way.

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